



Robert Sandilands Primary School and Nursery Annual Statement of Effectiveness – Academic Year 2023/24

1. Introduction to the School and Governing Board

Robert Sandilands School is a one form entry all-through primary school and nursery with a catchment area in the north of Newbury. At the end of the 2023/24 academic year, we had 237 pupils on the school roll.

The school has a very strong commitment to developing the unique qualities of each child and has a wide-ranging after-school enrichment programme. Pegasus Club offers those joining the Club before and after school care and opportunities for play and learning as well as hot meals and snacks.

Those children for whom pupil premium funds are received by the school have additional interventions as detailed on the pupil premium spend report on the school's website.

The school was inspected by OFSTED in November 2019 and found to be 'Good'. The OFSTED report was very positive about the school and the quality of the provision of education for our pupils. A new inspection is anticipated at some point in the next year.

2. Governance structure

In accordance with the Government's requirement for all governing bodies, the three core strategic functions of the Governing Board are to: 1) ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction; 2) hold the Head Teacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils; 3) overseeing the financial performance of the school and ensuring its money is well spent.

In 2023/24 the Governing Board met in person on eight occasions.

Minutes of the Governing Board meetings are added to the school website periodically throughout the year. The Instrument of Government can be viewed on the school website under the heading "The Governing Board". In 2023/24 the Chair of the Governing Board was Ian Nichol, and the Vice Chair was Janet Rimmer.

The Governing Board has delegated some functions to two Committees - the Finance Committee which meets once each long term and the Pay Committee which meets in the autumn term. The Committees have terms of reference and a membership agreed by the Governing Board annually. Full details of Governing Board and Committee memberships are available on the school website here <http://bit.ly/2Kwg7vN>.

Individual governors take on responsibilities for key areas of the school and report to the Governing Board on issues and progress in those areas. Governors also meet or speak to teachers through school visits and in the context of the responsibilities they have taken on to understand and monitor the implementation of the curriculum and outcomes related to it. In 2023/24 governors taking lead roles were as follows.

	Key Areas of Responsibility	Curriculum Area Lead
Ian Nichol	Chair of Governing Board / Health and Safety, Premises Governor	Computing
Janet Rimmer	Vice-Chair of Governing Board / Development, EYFS, SEND, Teaching and Learning Governor	English
Paul Archer	Chair of Finance, Sports Premium Governor	Music and PE
Katy Patten	Equality, More Able, Pupil Premium, Oracy Governor	History, Geography and RE
Mary Wearn	Safeguarding, Welfare Governor	PSHE / RSE and Art and Design
Daniel Scoon		Science and DT
Sue Nicholson		Maths

3. Attendance at meetings

Listed below are the attendance details for each Full Governing Board and Finance Committee meeting in 2023/24.

NAME		FGB Meetings 2023/2024									
	Sept 14th	Sept 23rd	Dec 7th	Jan 25th	Feb 8th	Mar 21st	Apr 25th	June 6th	July 23rd	Total Attended	
Libby Bucknell	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	9/9	
Helen Lewis	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	NA	7/8	
Ian Nichol	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	9/9	
Janet Rimmer	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	9/9	
Mary Wearn	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	9/9	
Katy Patten	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	8/9	
Paul Archer	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	8/9	
Daniel Scoon	NA	NA	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	7/7	
Sue Nicholson	NA	NA	NA	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	6/6	
Eve Burke	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Y	1/1	

Finance Meetings Attendance				Total Finance meetings held in 2023/24 – 5		
	Nov 9 th	March 11 th	April 24 th	June 19 th	June 27 th	Total attended
Paul Archer	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	5
Mary Wearn	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	4
Ian Nichol	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	4
Libby Bucknell	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	5

4. Training Attended

During the course of the year Governors attended a range of training courses in order to maintain or enhance their skills and knowledge. Information on this training is attached as **Appendix A**

Assessment of effectiveness and impact.

Board Capability and Management

During the year, Governors have reviewed their training and development and undertook a skills audit to identify any gaps and address those if necessary. At the commencement of the academic year the board had two governor vacancies and filling those had been a challenge. However, during the course of the year we were fortunate to be able to co-opt two new very capable governors so that we now have a full complement of governors on the board.

Board meetings are well attended, and the Board is supported and advised by a competent and knowledgeable Clerk.

In September 2023 the Board held a special 'Strategy Meeting' to understand and review the key longer term issues facing the school and to consider what actions the School should take to address those that were important to its future and that of the pupils. A comprehensive briefing paper on key issues was prepared at the governing boards preceding the meeting. The priorities identified at this Strategy meeting were: the development and embedding of the curriculum; having a robust workforce plan to support teaching and learning aspirations and goals; SEND pupils education; the EYFS education; having a sound financial footing for the school and in particular maintain high numbers on roll in the face of falling numbers of births; and the quality of the overall educational, social and emotional experience of pupils at the School. Subsequent Board meeting have worked on how these priorities can be addressed and incorporated into the Board's workplan and the Schools planning documents and processes.

Safeguarding

The Board takes very seriously its duties and obligations to ensure the safeguarding of pupils at the School. We ensure that all training is up to date. We have nominated a safeguarding lead governor who meets regularly with the school leadership to review safeguarding arrangements, and the outcome of the governor's work is reported to each Governing Board meeting and considered. The termly Headteacher's Report also provides an opportunity to review and, if necessary, challenge safeguarding issues.

The School Development Plan

The School Development Plan (SDP) is the key strategic document for the school setting out its aims and objectives and its key plans and priorities for development and improvement over a period of three years. The SDP is drafted based on evidence from a number of key source documents. These include the latest OFSTED report (having particular regard to the areas identified for improvement), data (internal data and the results of Key Stage and other testing for attainment and progress) and the School's Self Evaluation document which is reviewed an update at the start of each academic year. In addition, the SDP is informed by local and national policy developments and educational context and by parent and pupil voice. The Governing Board formally reviewed, revised, and rolled forward the SDP at the start the 2023/24 academic year and reviewed the progress of the SDP each term, considering corrective actions

and modifications in the light of operating experience. The large majority of the objectives and actions in the SDP had been achieved by the end of the year and in the few cases where this is not the case the reasons have been clear and corrections to the SDP made, or the action carried forward to the next year.

Pupil Progress and Attainment

The Board receive a termly detailed written Head Teacher's report covering all areas of the schools management and performance and Governors spend much effort reviewing these reports, questioning and challenging the School leadership where appropriate about Governors have high expectations about the progress and attainment of pupils at Robert Sandilands and over the year received regular reports on pupil progress and attainment for the nursery and both Key Stages and considered and challenged the data where appropriate to ensure they felt confident of the School's performance. Where areas for improvement are identified the School identifies improvement measures and these are monitored by FGB. The Governors and the school have particularly been focussing on progress and attainment of all pupils in Years 3 and 4, some of the children most affected by the Covid restrictions.

The School has a well-developed plan for the use of Pupil Premium funding to support the learning and development needs of eligible pupils and information about this is published on the school website. Progress is reviewed by the lead governor with the school's leadership and reported to the Governing Board.

The KS2 results were again gratifying this year with our Yr6 pupils overall performing much better than their peers in other West Berkshire schools and nationally.

Curriculum

The School works hard to plan and deliver a child-centred, broad, and balanced curriculum. During the year the Governors have focused on understanding how effectively this curriculum is taught and whether there are ways in which the Board can support and enhance its delivery. The Board appointed lead governors for each of the key curriculum areas. They meet with the school lead professionals for that curriculum area, visit the school to see how the curriculum is delivered and report back to the Board. Last year the Governors devoted two full Board meetings to focus on the English Curriculum and the Science Curriculum. This year we continued with this process by having a meeting dedicated to the Maths Curriculum. This review process was rounded off by having a further Governing Board meeting devoted entirely to reviewing and understanding how the school approaches inclusion and the teaching of SEND pupils.

School Site and Premises

Our health and safety and premises lead governor regularly visited the site with the School Business Manager and the Headteacher to review premises and health and safety issues, reporting the outcome to the Governing Board and Finance Committee. We maintain an asset management plan which is reviewed regularly. Over 2023/24 we have sought to ensure that the school is well maintained and have invested in new equipment within the limits of our budget.

We are very pleased that we were able to invest in new classroom furniture for Year 2, walkway carpets throughout the juniors and the Y6 classroom, sanding and re-sealing the wooden hall floor, as well as relaying and extending the external paving around the junior classroom paths; all of which will enhance the children's learning environment. Another side of our perimeter fencing has also been replaced to ensure a safe, secure environment.

Value for Money

The Finance Committee has been effective in working with the Headteacher to ensure that despite the financial challenges we face the school has achieved a robust budget situation with a reasonable level of reserves held for the financial year 2024/25. The committee has carefully scrutinised the budget and its management over the course of the year and undertakes every year an annual benchmarking exercises comparing our school to similar schools to inform decision making. Our effectiveness is reviewed through the annual completion of a Schools Financial Value Statement assessment process which is scrutinised by the local authority. The budget setting process for the next three financial years has been particularly challenging as a result of the School Business Manager moving to a new role in the Local Authority and the school experiencing considerable difficulties in recruiting a replacement (a new experienced Manager starts at the beginning of the new Academic Year). Nevertheless, despite this and the challenging external financial environment, we were able to set a budget that reflects the School's aspirations for resourcing teaching and learning which were decided in the workforce planning process which followed the Strategy Meeting in the Autumn.

Academic Year 2024/25

Our ambition is that Robert Sandilands should be recognised as a School that provides an outstanding educational, social and emotional education for our pupils. We intend to build on the work of the Board last year and the investments that have been made to aim to realise that ambition.

Appendix A

Training Completed

Paul Archer

Finance for Governors - WBC Online Training	29 Feb 2024
Universal Safeguarding Children Online Training	8 Sep 2023

Libby Bucknell

Asthma and Allergy Training	10 Jul 2024
Outdoor Leader	28 Mar 2024
Designated Safeguarding Lead Refresher	7 Mar 2024
Cyber Security Training for Schools	19 Sep 2023
Prevent Awareness e-training	18 Sep 2023
Universal Online Safeguarding training	14 Sep 2023

Ian Nichol

Universal Safeguarding Children Online Training	10 Aug 2024
Health and Safety training - West Berkshire Council	22 Nov 2023

Sue Nicholson

Universal Safeguarding Online Training	24 Aug 2024
Cyber Security Training for School Staff	20 Feb 2024

Katy Patten

Universal Safeguarding Children Online Training	12 Sep 2023
---	-------------

Luisa Rayner

NGA Online - Effective Financial Governance	14 Jul 2024
NGA Online - Monitoring Performance Data and Targets	15 May 2024
NGA Online - Early Years Education	15 May 2024
NGA Online - Health and safety	15 May 2024
NGA Online - The Governance of SEND	15 May 2024
NGA Online - Pupil Premium	22 Apr 2024

NGA Online - Progress and Attainment Data

6 Mar 2024

NGA Online - Ofsted: The Inspection Framework

17 Jan 2024

NGA Online - Ofsted Step by Step

17 Jan 2024

Cyber Security Training for Schools

11 Sep 2023

Universal Safeguarding Online Refresher

4 Sep 2023

Janet Rimmer

Universal Safeguarding Children Training (e-Learning)

13 Sep 2023

Daniel Scoon

New To Governance Training 1 (WBC)

21 Feb 2024

Mary Wearn

Universal Safeguarding Children Online Training

9 Sep 2023